Remarks

The Office Action dated March 30, 2006 has been carefully considered. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define applicant's invention. Currently, Claims 1-8 and 17-32 remain in the case with none of the claims indicated allowable.

The Office rejects Claims 1-8 and 17-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,824,441 to Kindig. Those rejections are traversed. Reconsideration after final is respectfully requested in light of the currently amended Claim 1, and because the cited art simply does not disclose the limitations of applicant's invention of Claims 17-32.

Regarding the rejections of Claims 17-32, it is clear that Kindig does not disclose applicant's *adjusting the reducing environment for a sufficient time period such that the flue gas acid dewpoint is lowered to a desirable level.* Kindig simply provides no indication that acid dewpoint is a parameter. As such, Kindig cannot anticipate the invention as claimed in Claims 17-32.

Regarding the rejections of Claims 1-8, the Office argues:

> Kindig clearly suggests that reducible acids (e.g. sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides) are reduced when fuel is introduced with a sulfur sorbent in an oxygen restricted combustion zone and combusted (see at least col. 6, lines 4-12).

Kindig does not, however, use applicant's claimed steps. In particular, Kindig does not disclose or suggest applicant's *maintaining the reducing environment for a sufficient time period such that reducible acids are reduced to a predetermined level to achieve a desirable acidity concentration in the flue gas.* The Office argues that Kindig's column 12, line 54 through column 13, line 23, and particularly that Equation 7, disclose applicant's *maintaining.* Equation 7 provides:

$$CaSo_4.MgO + SO_3 \rightarrow CaSO_4.MgSO_4$$

Equation 7 shows the reaction of a magnesium-based sorbent with a sulfur trioxide, i.e. it shows the binding of sulfur trioxide rather than the claimed *reduction* of sulfur trioxide.

As provided on page 3 of applicant's specification as filed (underlining added):

> If the SO_3 concentration is too low, the precipitator will operate at less than optimal efficiency. On the other hand, if the SO_3 concentration is too high, the flue gas becomes highly acidic, creating a "blue plume" and contributing to acid rain.

Kindig is not concerned with applicant's precipitator function. Kindig does not teach or suggest, as recited in the currently amended Claim, applicant's *reduction to a predetermined level,* or level that optimizes both precipitator efficiency and plume reduction.

Applicant submits that by this amendment, he has placed the case in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. However, if any issue remains unresolved, Applicant's attorney would welcome the opportunity for a telephone interview to expedite allowance and issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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File No.: 7340-011

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS BEING DEPOSITED WITH THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AS FIRST-CLASS MAIL, IN AN ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO: **COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P.O. BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450**, ON MAY 11, 2006

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